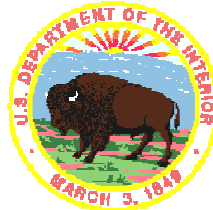




BLM News Release

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Vale District Office
100 Oregon Street, Vale, Oregon 97918-9630
<http://www.or.blm.gov/Vale/>



For Immediate Release

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News Contact:

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Magpie Peak Fire Update

Vale, Oregon, August 12 - The Magpie Peak wildfire, located 9 miles northeast of Baker city, which has burned an estimated 2300 acres of dense sagebrush stands in and around the Powder River Canyon, is now 70% contained. The lightning-caused fire was reported at 6:15 p.m. on August 10th, to the Vale District, Bureau of Land Management. At the height of fire suppression activities, 17 engines, 2 helicopters, 3 air tankers, 4 20-person hand crews, 3 dozers, 2 water tenders, and overhead support, for a total of 156 people were working to suppress this fire. Resources were called from Roseburg BLM and the Umpqua National Forest and many private contractors. Mike Hartwell, Fire Management Officer for the Vale District said, "Extreme fire conditions including heavy fuels, erratic winds, and very rugged terrain made this a difficult fire to suppress." Retardant drops along the Powder River canyon rim were used to prevent the fire from escaping the canyon; however efforts were not successful. Friday afternoon the fire crested the rim, crossed fire lines and began running north. Crews working to mop-up the south flank of the fire were moved to safety zones, along with some equipment.

As of early this morning, 100% of the line is complete and the fire is 70% contained. Predicted winds this morning should be W 2-5 mph (valleys) and SW 5-10 mph (ridges).

No personal injuries. No structures lost. The North Powder fire district water tender and BLM heavy engines are staged to help defend the 5 occupied structures, if needed. All roads are currently open. Caution should be exercised when traveling Highway 203 and Telocaset Road within the vicinity of the fire due to possible visibility limitations caused by smoke. Effective immediately until further notice, a temporary flight restriction is in effect below 5,000 feet within 5 nautical mile radius of the fire center, to provide a safe environment for fire fighting aircraft operations.

Estimated time of containment: 12:00 p.m. Saturday, August 12th

Estimated time of control: Unknown

Information

Fire Information Center, Vale District Office: 541-473-6339

Sources:

Barb Masinton, Incident Information Officer

Time of Release: 9:00 a.m. MST, Saturday, August 12, 2000

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